[Chaco Period] Terena

For carrying and storing foodstuffs the Terena used such containers as clay pots, calabashes, baskets, and netted bags. In their houses they also kept such tools and weapons as the digging stick, stone ax, club, spear, and bow and arrows. Materials for weaving baskets and bags were kept in corners, while dried meat, dried fish, skins of animals, and bags of vegetable foods hung from the rafters.

CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS

Both men and women wore a cotton loincloth stretching from the waist to the knees, known as a *shiripá*. A shorter black *shiripá* was worn by men on war parties. During cold weather everyone wore a sleeveless cotton shirt, *repenóti*. In warm weather children went about unclothed. Both men and women used pentagon-shaped leather sandals fastened with a leather thong. All body hair, including eyebrows and pubic hair, was carefully pulled out with pincers. Hair was combed back over the head and fastened with a cord.

The Terena were fond of wearing necklaces, *nakóti;* bracelets, *imotáki;* and anklets, *imóheve.* These decorations were made by stringing dried seeds, animal teeth, and disks of shell and bone on a cotton cord. In later days, glass beads and bracelets and rings made from silver and even gold were used. During ceremonials the Terena used diadems made from red feathers and short skirts made from rhea feathers. Yellow parrot feathers could be used only by chiefs and usually signified that the wearer had killed an enemy. War chiefs wore, in addition, a robe made from jaguar skins.

Discussing the dress and painted designs of the Terena, Castelnau says:

> These Indians have no other clothes than a piece of cloth which they wrap around their kidneys, their hair is suspended at the back of the head and tied up to form a tail. Both sexes have the habit of covering their bodies with singular paintings, resembling those of the Guaycuru. Their designs are often excessively delicate and represent a harmony and delicacy which by no means can be described. [Ibid., vol. 2, p. 471.]

In connection with ornaments and body paintings, Castelnau adds the following:

> Here are glass beads which are fastened onto cotton cloths with wide stripes. There are scarlet feathers which are tied together and cut to make head ornaments; over there is a woman who is covering her husband's body with

[P.9-A]

616
the *sukirikionó* would paint half their bodies 796
white and the other half black. 302

SOCIAL CLASSES

In addition to the dual division, the Terena 565
were separated into four social classes: (1) Chiefs (*unati*), (2) warriors (*shuna'asheti*), (3) commoners (*waheresháne*), and (4) slaves (*kauti*). The chiefly class comprised the moiety chiefs and their relatives. The *unati* were the highest class [582]
in rank and were supposed to marry within their own group. As one could marry only within his own moiety this often meant village exogamy to members of this class. On coming of age the sons 881
of the *unati* went through an elaborate puberty 565
ceremony (*tima*) which amounted to initiation 622
into the chiefly class. In historic times the principal part of the ceremony consisted in the boy approaching his father dressed in a light-red blan- [292]
ket which he would take off and substitute for the dark-red blanket worn by his father. Only the sons of the *unati* went through this ceremony. [568]
The daughters of the chiefs also went through a [554]
puberty ceremony (*iyoti*) much more elaborate than the puberty ceremony of the daughters of common people.

All the living war chiefs and their children and 565
relatives made up the warrior class. Here, again, marriage within the group was demanded. Com- [641]
moners were free tribesmen who had not acquired status through war or marriage into the two upper classes. Slaves were young women and children 567
captured in raids, or the children of war captives. 565
Slaves performed services for their masters, followed them in war and danced with them during ceremonials. If a slave distinguished himself in war by killing an enemy he could become a free man. It is said that a slave could even become a war chief if he were particularly successful in war. On the other hand, a slave could be sold or killed by his master.

In war, moiety differences were disregarded and 616
the village acted as a unit. Every large village 701
had a war chief (*shuna'asheti*) who held office both 726
in war and peace and was the head of the warrior class. As an individual he had the highest 554
rank in the village and drank first at all ceremonies. He, too, carried a cow's horn trumpet [534]
as a symbol of rank. In addition, he wore a [292]
jaguar skin shirt and a head band of parrot [239]
feathers.

/408 cont./

796 [533] whereupon the musicians go into their little houses and start noisy music. Then there are dancing and drinking the whole night through, and not until the first gray of dawn do the festival 796 participants disperse. During the forenoon of the second day all 541 the young men gather at the plaza, split up into two opposing parties, and attack each other until one party is beaten. This fight takes place without weapons, but the fists are used vigorously, and most have bloody heads after the battle. I was shown a young Indian who had lost an eye this way. After the fight everybody 796 gathers in the hut of the chief. One of the musicians, /409/ who [225] is lavishly adorned, carries stag antlers in his right hand and limps to a hut pointed out to him, knocks there with the antlers on the door post, and limps back. Then the owner of the hut comes out and asks what is wanted, whereupon everybody shouts: A head of cattle (cow or bull)! (The whole tribe buys this head of cattle [262] before the festival.) Then the man goes back and fetches the head of cattle, which is immediately slaughtered and eaten. As soon as the meat is consumed and the caña drunk up, everyone goes home, and with this the festival is over.

796 The second great festival of the Terenos is called mainu and 541 sometimes lasts 14 days. Early in the morning on the first day, 562 all the men have a rendezvous at a place kept secret from the [302] women, paint themselves until they are unrecognizable, and [411] then rush shouting into the village, shooting their guns and bows, and act as though they were enemies and were about to attack the village. The women in the meantime have armed themselves with clubs, fruits, etc., and a mock battle then develops. The women throw gourds, clubs, etc. at the heads of their men and 796 finally drive them out of the village. In the afternoon the men 535 gather at the village plaza and place themselves in two rows. [237] Then an oddly bedecked dancer appears. He wears a coat of [302] leaves, his head is decorated with horns and feathers, his body painted with black and red paint. Under his right arm he carries a lance, in his left hand a club; he acts as though he were very tired, makes all sorts of grimaces in connection with this, limps

/409 cont./

796 535 a few hundred steps away from the company, pretends to eat, returns again to the assemblage, and for some hours carries on this farcical nonsense, with which the spectators are marvelously amused. This dance finishes the first festival day. In the plaza, usually in the middle, there is built a hut which the men enter on the afternoon of the next day. Five or six of them make themselves unrecognizable by hanging ostrich feathers over their eyes, decorating their heads with crowns of feathers, painting face and body, and tying the choatie around their legs. Then they dance, one after the other, twice around the plaza and finally return to the hut, whereupon five or six others repeat the same dance. This dance is performed every day for a few hours as long as the festival lasts. The women are not permitted to enter the hut in which the men dress up, for the big joke is that the women must guess who the dancers are. The festival lasts a longer or shorter time, depending on how much caña is on hand, and ends when the supply is exhausted.

[237] [302] [562]

/90 cont./

361 Boquehina Aldea. It has 18 ranchos, some from 6 to 8
342 meters long by 3 or 4 wide; it is inhabited by 298 Indians.
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621 Marro Aldea. It has 24 ranchos, some from 9 to 10 meters long by 4 to 5 meters wide and other smaller ones; 386 Indians live in it.

Marrinho Aldea. It has 15 ranchos, the largest from 8 to 10 meters long by 2 to 4 meters wide; 257 Indians live there.

Ipéqué Aldea. It has 11 ranchos, some from 5 to 7 meters long /91/ by 2 to 4 meters wide, and others smaller. In it live 246 Indians.

Santa-Ana Aldea. It has 23 ranchos, some from 6 to 10 meters long by 3 to 4 meters wide, with 379 Indians.

Caytapé Aldea. It has 19 ranchos from 8 to 10 meters long by 3 to 5 meters wide, and 315 Indians.

142 Somatic data. The Terena have dark copper-colored skin, ugly flat face, low forehead, black hair, straight and thick, scanty beard, black eyes, a small nose, small mouth, strong, very white teeth, small ears, small hands and feet.

352 The rancho. The interior of the rancho of these Indians
[237] shows rustic bamboo beds covered with the skin of a cow or of some other wild animal. The hide serves as a mattress,
[445] the pillows are small bags stuffed with straw, there are in addition in the hut several hammocks, several clay pots for water, and some rustic benches, they have no table, their table is the ground.

The kitchen. This is a very simple rancho, or better said
353 a straw roof, some two meters square and a meter and a half
343 high, under which they keep dishes, pots, and other kitchen utensils.

771 Worship. The Terena believe that there is a God in the
825 sky and they believe in the virtues of the tail of the rattlesnake,
787 which has the gift of being able to communicate with the souls
776 in the other world. The only religious fiesta that they celebrate
[82] is the one which corresponds to our Holy Week; it is the passage of the seven stars; this fiesta lasts seven days.